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THE MEDITERRANEAN AND THE ROMAN REVOLUTION: POLITICS, WAR AND THE ECONOMY*

IF WE WANT TO UNDERSTAND THE VIOLENT HISTORY OF THE LATE Roman Republic, which in a few decades saw both a vast extension of Roman conquest and the establishment of monarchy by Augustus, we might begin with an anecdote told by Plutarch about Julius Caesar.¹ As he was passing a tiny barbarian village in the Alps, one of his companions said, "Is it possible that here too there are rivalries for office, competitions for honours, and jealousies of each other on the part of the leading men?". Caesar replied, "I would rather be first among these people than second among the Romans". This story may be apocryphal; but whether it is or not, it well reflects the spiralling competition which in the end destroyed the rules for the sharing and limitation of power at Rome, and with them the Republic itself. The story of that destruction is familiar, not least from Syme's *The Roman Revolution*. But it also gives us a partial and momentary glimpse of the wider context, made up of a vast range of local communities, within which that competition took place; modern estimates tend to put the population of the early Roman empire at something like fifty million people.²

What consequences did Roman political history have for the populations of the different regions? Suppose, for example, that we ask ourselves not about Caesar and his rivals but about those Alpine villagers. At the time to which the anecdote relates the Alpine passes from Italy into Gaul are reported to have been dangerous and unsecured. Merchants and even Roman armies travelling over them had to pay high tolls to the mountain peoples, and Caesar's efforts to change that had no lasting effect.³ Yet, by contrast, Vitruvius happens to preserve an instance of how Caesar's operations did serve to integrate one mountain village into a wider economy. One year when he was operating in the foothills of the Alps — probably the

* This paper was given as a lecture at the Triennial Meeting of the Hellenic and Roman Societies in 1981. It is printed here essentially in the same form, since for the reasons given in the text the evidence does not in any case allow more than a preliminary exploration of possibilities. I am grateful to Keith Hopkins for comments and suggestions.

¹ Plutarch, *Caesar*, 11; Plutarch, *Moralia*, 206B.

² R. Syme, *The Roman Revolution* (Oxford, 1939). For population estimates, see for example M. I. Finley, *The Ancient Economy* (London, 1973), p. 30; K. Hopkins, "Taxes and Trade in the Roman Empire, 200 B.C.-A.D. 400", *Jl. Roman Studies*, lxx (1980), pp. 101-25, at pp. 117-18.

³ Caesar, *De bello Gallico*, i. 10, 4, and iii. 1, 1-2.

eastern Alps, between Aquileia and Virunum — Caesar ordered the local communities to provide supplies. One fortified village (*castellum*) refused, and was besieged. Attempts to burn down its wooden towers totally failed, demonstrating the properties of the larchwood of which they were built. In consequence the village earned not only the Latin name “Larignum” but also a trade in larchwood, which by Augustus’ time was in use in the towns along the Po and down the coast southwards to Ravenna, Ariminum, Pisaurum and Fanum.⁴

By contrast, the Salassi of the Val d’Aosta were finally “integrated” by military defeat in 25 B.C.; 8,000 combatants and 36,000 non-combatants were sold as slaves, while a Roman *colonia* was established at Aosta.⁵ In this case the intervention of the Roman state was drastic and decisive. Elsewhere it might be more partial, indirect and indecisive — partial in both senses, for Caesar soon learned in Gaul that the barbarian or semi-barbarian peoples of the west could go in for faction-fights just as savage as those at Rome, and he intervened repeatedly in them himself. The same was true in the Alpine area itself. In 49 B.C. Cicero’s friend Caelius wearily reported from somewhere in northern Italy that a garrison-commander serving in Pompey’s forces in the Maritime Alps had been bribed by one faction among the Intimilii to murder a *princeps* there named Comitius, who was a former host of Caesar. The people of Intimilium had reacted by taking to arms, and Caelius was obliged to set off with some cohorts through the snow to restore order.⁶

The common characteristic of these cases, all from the Alpine region, is that they show an interaction between the activities of the Roman state in the period of conquests and civil wars, and the political or economic life of local communities. The question posed in this article is: can we gain any serious conception of how and in what ways the apparently earth-shaking events of the period from say 88 to 31 B.C. really affected the social and economic life of ordinary people, grouped in their local communities? The answer, which at any serious level is clearly “no”, is a reflection of the drastic limitations imposed by the restricted volume, and even more restricted nature, of the evidence surviving from the Ancient World. All that is possible is to pick out a number of different dimensions

⁴ Vitruvius, ii. 9, 15-16. See J. Šašel, “Castellum Larignum (Vitr. 2, 9, 15)”, *Historia*, xxx (1981), pp. 254-6, for the suggested identification with *Larix* in *Itinerarium Antonini*, 276. See now R. Meiggs, *Trees and Timber in the Ancient Mediterranean World* (Oxford, 1982), pp. 248 ff.

⁵ Strabo, *Geography*, iv. 6, 7 (205-6); Cassius Dio, *Roman History*, liii. 25, 2-5; cf. Appian, *Illyrian History*, 17/49-51; *Inscriptiones latinae selectae*, ed. H. Dessau, 3 vols. (Berlin, 1892-1916), no. 6753 (showing that some surviving Salassi were included in the population of the *colonia*).

⁶ Cicero, *Letters*, viii. 15, 2 (ed. D. R. Shackleton Bailey, 2 vols., Cambridge, 1977, no. 149).

or aspects which are in various ways relevant to trying to understand something about the Mediterranean world in the last half-century of the Republic. For instance we may pose the following question: if, as many people assume, we should envisage not a Mediterranean-wide economy, of which inter-regional trade was an essential characteristic, but a network of strictly local economies, how profound an effect could political or military events, or the demands of an ancient state, have had on them? Short-term effects of course. Even our severely political or military narratives allow us to catch a fleeting glimpse, for instance, of the bakery in Ravenna from which Caesar requisitioned some mules for his journey to the Rubicon in 49 B.C.;⁷ or the druggist's shop in Gomphoi in Thessaly, where the leading citizens of the town committed suicide by taking poison as Pompey gave the place over to be ravaged by his troops in 48 B.C.⁸

Sometimes we catch similar glimpses of long-distance trade, such as the export of figs, evidently dried figs, from Caunus in Caria to Italy in the 50s. We know this only because when Crassus was embarking at Brundisium for his Parthian expedition a man was standing in the harbour calling out "Cauneas, Cauneas!" — which to some observers sounded all too like "Cave ne eas" (Beware lest you go).⁹ Sometimes we gather even less than that: when Caesar's lieutenant Curio was defeated and killed in the civil war in Africa in 49 B.C. his fleet promptly sailed off, and some of his forces, trying to make their escape, begged to be taken on board the merchant ships which were at anchor in the harbour at Utica. But when the ships came inshore that night, some of the ships' boats were overloaded and sank; and as for the soldiers who did get on board, the majority of those who had any money on them were thrown into the sea by the merchants.¹⁰

There the story as we have it stops — it is simply a moment of pathos in Appian's narrative of the civil wars. We hear nothing of the nationality of the merchants, the nature of their cargoes, the size of their ships, or of their destination, or destinations. But we do gather something which is quite important. As appears repeatedly in the narratives of this period, the operation of merchant ships between different regions of the Mediterranean is simply presumed as part of the social and economic framework within which military and political conflicts were conducted. Such long-distance trade may have been affected by war and civil war; it certainly did not stop, even in

⁷ Suetonius, *Divus Julius*, 31.

⁸ Appian, *Civil Wars*, ii. 64/269.

⁹ Cicero, *On Divination*, ii. 84; Pliny, *Natural History*, xv. 83. Cicero makes clear that he is talking about figs actually imported from Caunus ("caricas Cauno advectas") and not just a type named after the place. Pliny, *Natural History*, xv. 82, describes various methods of storage.

¹⁰ Appian, *Civil Wars*, ii. 46/187-8.

the most immediate areas of conflict. Nor apparently did the day-to-day operations of local inshore fishermen. Or at least, if we want a paradigm of the limited effects of these apparently major conflicts on local economic life, we have it to hand in the splendid anecdote of Sulla and the fishermen of Halae in Greece. When Sulla was in Greece in 84-3, on his way back from Asia to Italy, he went for a cure to Aedeptus in the north of Euboea. When he was walking on the shore there, some fishermen appeared and presented him with a gift of fish. But when he asked where they came from and they replied that they came from Halae, he was furious; for after the victory of Orchomenus in 86 he had ordered the destruction of the towns of Anthedon, Larymna and Halae. However, on reflection, he forgave them, and the people of Halae, who evidently had abandoned the actual site of the town, gained the courage to return to it.¹¹ So even where a small town was evacuated or destroyed, the people might continue earning their living almost as if it had not happened.

So should we try the extreme hypothesis that the great conflicts of the six decades down to the battle of Actium in 31 B.C. really made no significant difference at all? That the ordinary world of local communal life, customs and work just went on unaffected? Again we might use as a paradigm the story which Diodorus tells of his own visit to Egypt in 60 or 59 B.C. Just then King Ptolemy Auletes was waiting for recognition from Rome, and there was great anxiety on the part of some to avoid giving offence to Rome, or to any individual Romans. But when a visiting Roman in Egypt accidentally killed a cat, a crowd of Egyptians, enraged by this offence to their religious beliefs, and oblivious of all such geo-political considerations, rushed to the house where he was staying and lynched him.¹²

Egypt was to remain outside direct Roman control until 30 B.C.; and in this case local evidence, in the form of papyri in Greek and Egyptian, might one day make possible a more detailed assessment of whatever changes Roman rule brought about. Here we also have an extra element, the Egyptian monumental and inscriptional evidence, for instance the remarkable funerary stelae of the high priests of Memphis, which stretch from the third century B.C. into the reign of Augustus, and then seem to stop;¹³ why, it is not clear. But Egypt is one area where we may one day be able to study change — social, economic, religious — over the period of transition.

Elsewhere we are bound to see things very much from the outside. Gaul, for instance, was another place where there was a sudden and irreversible imposition of Roman rule. But again, have we any idea

¹¹ Plutarch, *Sulla*, 26.

¹² Diodorus, i. 44, 1 (visit in 180th Olympiad, 60-56 B.C.), and 83, 8-9.

¹³ See D. J. Crawford, J. Quaegebeur and W. Clarysse, *Studies on Ptolemaic Memphis* (Louvain, 1980).

of what this meant for ordinary social and economic life? We can of course turn to classical ethnographic or geographical sources — above all to the descriptive parts of Caesar's *De bello Gallico* and to Strabo's *Geography*. These are of great interest, for it is quite clear that people in Graeco-Roman society in the first century B.C. were conscious of living surrounded by barbarian peoples with different customs, who were none the less slowly coming under external influences.¹⁴ Well-known passages from Diodorus and Caesar, for instance, illustrate the penetration of Italian trade into Gaul before the conquest.¹⁵ Vitruvius also notes the continued use of wooden or thatched roofs in Spain and Gaul, and of straw and earth ones even at Marseilles.¹⁶ Varro, in his dialogue on agriculture set in Rome, makes one of the speakers report that when he had been in command of an army near the Rhine he had observed an entirely non-Mediterranean type of agriculture: no vines, olives or fruit trees, chalk used as fertilizer, and no salt but a sort of charcoal which was used instead.¹⁷ But even if this is a genuine reminiscence (which is doubtful),¹⁸ it points to a fundamental difficulty. The more specific and concrete, and the more precisely located in space and time a description is, the less it will help us to observe change — or to see whether there were basic changes or not; for that we would need a series of precise reports, descriptions or documents, which we almost never have. But the more general and systematic such a report is, the less clear it will be whether it is or could have been based on real observation. The geographer Strabo, for instance, repeatedly says that the Gauls have now (under Augustus) given up war and taken to agriculture.¹⁹ That does indeed suggest large changes; but we know both that the Gauls already practised agriculture and that there was a whole series of revolts down to the 20s A.D. So how much is such a generalization worth?

In the case of Gaul, however, we can gain some elements of an answer from archaeology, and especially numismatics. In central Gaul a marked phase of urbanization had been under way since the

¹⁴ For example, on the ethnography of the Celts, see J. J. Tierney, "The Celtic Ethnography of Posidonius", *Proc. Roy. Irish Acad.*, lx (1960), pp. 189-275; A. D. Momigliano, *Alien Wisdom: The Limits of Hellenization* (Cambridge, 1975), ch. 3; D. Nash, "Reconstructing Poseidonius' Celtic Ethnography: Some Considerations", *Britannia*, vii (1976), pp. 111-26.

¹⁵ Diodorus, v, 26, 3 (Italian traders exchanging wine for slaves); Caesar, *De bello Gallico*, i, 1, 3 and ii, 15, 4 (lesser impact of traders on Belgic north). For the background, see for example G. Clemente, *I Romani nella Gallia meridionale II-I sec. a.C.: politica ed economia nell'età dell'imperialismo* (Bologna, 1974).

¹⁶ Vitruvius, ii, 1, 4.

¹⁷ Varro, *De re rustica*, i, 7, 8.

¹⁸ For acute problems over this, see Pauly-Wissowa, *Realencyklopaedie*, s.v. "Tremellius" (5).

¹⁹ Strabo, *Geography*, iv, 1, 2 (178); i, 5 (180); i, 11-14 (185-9); 3, 5 (194); 4, 2 (195-6).

early first century B.C. The Gallic communities — which Caesar calls *civitates* and which it is misleading to call “tribes”²⁰ — minted coins in various combinations of gold, silver and bronze or tin/copper alloy. In the 50s the minting of precious-metal coinage greatly increased, apparently for the payment of troops. Afterwards gold coins ceased, and silver was greatly reduced. Two explanations are offered: firstly, silver, and even more gold, was soaked up by indemnities paid to Rome after the conquest by Caesar in the 50s; secondly, troops were no longer needed, so precious metal coinage was no longer struck to pay them. In the urbanized central areas Celtic bronze coins, in small denominations, continued to be minted, implying that they were in daily use. But specifically Roman coins are hardly found in the central part of Gaul until the middle of the first century A.D. Where they were in use was in the north-east, where the legions were stationed.²¹

Here at least we have significant evidence, which has however to be interpreted in the light of large-scale hypotheses both about the nature of Roman rule, and the structure of the local communities. We can also see Gallic soldiers, mainly cavalry, serving all over the Mediterranean in the period of the civil wars, in a variety of Roman forces, with Juba I in Africa and notably with Cleopatra; these last were transferred by Octavian to King Herod of Judaea in 30 B.C., and a Gallic unit was still in his service when he died in 4 B.C.²² Again we cannot tell what effects, if any, this service abroad had on Gallic society; but we do know that even before Caesar, Aquitanians had served in Spain with the dissident Roman governor Sertorius in the 70s B.C., that they had returned home and were available to lead their fellow-countrymen in resistance to Caesar’s forces in 56.²³ We have clear evidence also of Caesar’s interventions in Gallic political life, and his grants of citizenship and other favours to leading Gallic aristocrats, like the two Allobrogan brothers to whom he had given large sums of money and stretches of captured land at home, and had appointed to local offices — and who then deserted to

²⁰ So J. Harmand, “La Gaule indépendante et la conquête”, in C. Nicolet (ed.), *Rome et la conquête du monde méditerranéen*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1977-8), ii, pp. 700-26, at p. 706.

²¹ D. Nash, “Plus ça change . . . : Currency in Central Gaul from Julius Caesar to Nero”, in R. A. G. Carson and C. M. Kraay (eds.), *Scripta Nummaria Romana: Essays Presented to Humphrey Sutherland* (London, 1978), pp. 12-31. For the background, see D. Nash, *Settlement and Coinage in Central Gaul, c. 200-50 B.C.*, 2 vols. (*British Archaeological Reports*, Supp. Ser. xxxix, Oxford, 1978).

²² For example, Suetonius, *Divus Julius*, 24 (V Alauda); Caesar, *De bello civili*, i. 39, 2; 51, 1; iii. 4, 4; 22-3; [Caesar], *Bellum Alexandrinum* 17, 3; [Caesar], *Bellum Africum*, 6, 3; 19, 3-4; 20; Appian, *Civil Wars*, ii. 70/91, and iv. 88/373. For Juba I’s 2,000 Spanish and Gallic cavalry, see Caesar, *De bello civili*, ii. 40, 1. For Octavian’s transfer of 400 Gauls to Herod in 30 B.C., see Josephus, *Jewish War*, i. 20, 3 (397), and Josephus, *Antiquities*, xv. 7, 3 (217). For Herod’s funeral, see Josephus, *Jewish War*, i. 33, 9 (672), and Josephus, *Antiquities*, xvii. 8, 3 (198).

²³ Caesar, *De bello civili*, iii. 23, 5-6.

Pompey before the battle of Pharsalus.²⁴ Other families showed a better sense of survival, and the C. Iulius Rufus who dedicated the Roman arch at Saintes in A.D. 19 was the grandson of a man whom Caesar had made a Roman citizen.²⁵ But it still remains completely uncertain what degree of continuity or change in property relations or social structure characterized Gaul after the conquest, even at the level of the richer members of the major *civitates*.²⁶

But even if we could reach some secure generalizations about the upper classes of Gaul, we would have to remember two things. The first is the vast differences of habits and culture between social classes even within the already conquered areas. Varro for instance claims to have observed in barbarian Illyricum (roughly Yugoslavia) how a peasant woman would step aside from work, give birth to a child and continue with her toil.²⁷ But a few decades earlier Poseidonius had reported being told of just the same thing among workers hired for digging on an estate in Liguria belonging to a friend of his from Massilia.²⁸

These workers in Liguria, whose customs seemed totally foreign or barbarian to their own employer, were at least within a wage-earning economy, receiving a daily wage in cash just like those in many of the New Testament parables; and they were thus linked quite closely to the trans-Mediterranean world of the landowning classes of the Greek cities. The man who paid their wages could be a friend of Poseidonius, the great philosopher from Apamea in Syria, who taught in Rhodes and visited Rome. In that they were unlike the peoples in north-west Spain whom Strabo describes, living on goat meat, acorns, and butter made out of olive oil; Strabo, speaking of these peoples, also gives us one of the earliest descriptions of couvade, noting that in this region, when a child was born, the father retired to bed and was looked after by the wife.²⁹ But to come back to the main point, the second thing we have to remember is that it was not only these mountain peoples in the distant interior of Spain who remained unsubjugated until Augustus' reign. Our convenient maps of the Roman provinces in this period are a polite fiction, for in hilly areas much closer to the coast of the Mediterranean itself

²⁴ *Ibid.*, iii. 59-61, and 79.

²⁵ *Corpus inscriptionum latinarum*, ed. H. Dessau, 3 vols. (Berlin, 1892-1916), xiii. 1063; cf. P. Wuilleumier, *Inscriptions latines des Trois Gaules* (Paris, 1963), no. 148.

²⁶ For contrast, see J. F. Drinkwater, "The Rise and Fall of the Gallic Iulii: Aspects of the Development of the Aristocracy of the Three Gauls under the Early Empire", *Latomus*, xxxvii (1978), pp. 817-50; E. M. Wightman, "Peasants and Potentates: An Investigation of Social Structure and Land Tenure in Roman Gaul", *Amer. Jl. Ancient Hist.*, iii (1978), pp. 97-128.

²⁷ Varro, *De re rustica*, ii, 10, 9.

²⁸ Strabo, *Geography*, iii. 4, 7 (155). See Poseidonius, vol. i, *The Fragments*, ed. L. Edelstein and I. G. Kidd (Cambridge, 1972), T.23 and F.269.

²⁹ Strabo, *Geography*, iii. 3, 7 (155); 4, 17 (165).

there remained free peoples. Even if we ignore those areas like Illyricum where there was an unconquered hinterland,³⁰ there was still brigandage in Corsica and Sicily in Strabo's time, while Diodorus twice asserts that the peoples of central Sardinia had never been conquered by either Carthage or Rome.³¹ That recalls Cicero's famous campaign of 51 B.C., as the Roman governor of Cilicia (southern Turkey), first against the fortified villages of the Amanus, which were captured and burnt, and then against the "free Cilicians" (Eleutherocilices) of Pindenissum "who had never yielded obedience even to the kings" — the Seleucid kings, that is. Those captured at Pindenissum were put on sale, and Cicero reported to Atticus that 120,000 *sesterces* had been realized from the sale so far.³²

Much modern discussion of the supposed social and economic effects of Roman conquest is dominated by the presupposition of the mass transfer of slaves to Italy. But populations captured in war were sold on the spot, or at least in the same region (like the Salassi, mentioned above, who were sold at Eporedia in northern Italy). Some will simply have been ransomed, others sold locally, like the Jews who had been captured by Cassius and were currently in slavery in Tyre, Sidon, Antioch and Aradus, and whose release Antonius ordered in 42 B.C. Whatever major social effects the wars of this period had, it was not by the direct transfer of whole populations before sale.³³ Those slaves who reached Italy — as of course large numbers did — did so via the medium of the slave-trade; for instance, we meet one Publicius on his way through Etruria in 83, bringing slaves for sale from Gaul to Rome.³⁴ Whatever the overall economic character of the slave-trade — and obviously it involved a net import of slaves into Italy — it was certainly not a simple one of the extraction of value by Rome. For the immediate profits from the sale of captives into slavery were normally made by Roman generals and soldiers wherever they were on campaign; only some of the value thus realized will have reached Rome or Italy. Other profits will have been made by the middlemen who traded in slaves. If these slaves eventually found their way to Italy it will have been by purchase, involving an outflow of cash.

³⁰ For Illyricum, see Appian, *Illyrian History*, 12; and note [Caesar], *Bellum Alexandrinum*, 48, 1-3 (Gabinus attacking *castella*, and driven back to Salona); Cicero, *Letters*, v. 10a-b (ed. Shackleton Bailey, nos. 256, 258) (Vatinius trying to gain a triumph against the Dalmatians).

³¹ See Strabo, *Geography*, v. 2, 7 (224) (Corsica); vi. 2, 6 (273) (Sicily); Diodorus, iv. 30, 4-6, and v. 15, 3-5 (Sardinia).

³² Cicero, *Letters*, ii. 10, 3 (ed. Shackleton Bailey, no. 86), and xv. 4, 9-10 (no. 110); Cicero, *Letters to Atticus*, v. 20, 3-5 (no. 113).

³³ Josephus, *Antiquities*, xiv. 304-23. See H. Volkmann, *Die Massenversklavungen der Einwohner erobelter Städte in der hellenistisch-römischen Zeit* (Mainz, 1961), pp. 105-10.

³⁴ Cicero, *For Quinctius*, 24.

However, even if we see the existence of pockets of unintegrated, or unsubjugated, peoples within the supposedly provincial areas as an indication of the limits of the Roman state's real functions, their villages *might* at any time be captured and burnt, and their populations sold into slavery. To return to the Alpine region once again, we find Decimus Brutus, as proconsul of Cisalpine Gaul (northern Italy) in 43 B.C., writing casually to Cicero, "I have advanced against the Inalpini with my army, not so much seeking the title of Imperator as wishing to satisfy the soldiers . . . I have captured many *castella* and devastated many".³⁵

These small-scale internal conquests, like the major external ones of Lucullus, Pompey and Caesar, were thus one means by which the state, as embodied in an ambitious proconsul, might drastically intervene in a local society and economy, with either temporary or permanent effects. As is obvious, the pace of these interventions accelerated enormously in the course of the first century B.C. At the beginning of the century, indeed, we could well follow Strabo's view that the main economic and social effect of Roman predominance, at least in the eastern Mediterranean, was negative — namely the weakness of the major Hellenistic powers and the failure to replace them with anything else; piracy and the slave-trade thus raged unchecked until substantially ended by Pompey's massive operations in 67 B.C.³⁶ In the early first century B.C., after all, Rome directly ruled (that is, raised taxes from) no more than Italy itself, with Sicily, Sardinia and Corsica; part of Spain and the route to it through southern Gaul; a small island of territory in north Africa; and in the east, Macedonia, Greece and the province of "Asia" (the western coast of Turkey and its hinterland). When Ptolemy Apion left the kingdom of Cyrene (eastern Libya) to Rome in 96, no action was taken. What this meant for the character of life in Cyrenaica is now vividly illustrated by a decree from Berenice (Benghazi) published a few years ago.³⁷ It honours a public-spirited citizen named Apollodorus: "Firstly, immediately after the death of the king, when Berenice was vigorously besieged by the wrongdoers [probably, political dissidents], as a result of the prevailing absence of magistrates in office he was called upon to command the young men [the town's military force], and, enduring every danger, restored conditions to a state of complete peace". Subsequently the city, which was walled, endured two successive raids by pirate fleets, and Apollodorus performed further services, as he seems to have done

³⁵ Cicero, *Letters*, xi. 4 (ed. Shackleton Bailey, no. 342).

³⁶ Strabo, *Geography*, xiv. 5, 2 (688-9).

³⁷ J. M. Reynolds, "A Civic Decree from Benghazi", *The Society for Libyan Studies: Fifth Annual Report* (1973/4), pp. 19-24; now re-edited by J. M. Reynolds in J. A. Lloyd (ed.), *Excavations at Sidi Khrebish, Berenice — Benghazi* (Libya antiqua, supplementary vol., vi, Tripoli, 1982), pp. 234, no. 3.

later also in the period of the imposition of effective Roman control in the 60s.

It is important to remember that the idea that the freedom of the Greek city state had disappeared at the moment of Alexander's conquest is a fantasy. The Greek cities, like the Gallic, Punic and Iberian *civitates* of the west, were political and military communities which had no option but to make political and diplomatic choices, could and did withstand sieges, and were expected to send military and naval contingents to assist their allies, including Rome. We can see this clearly in two of the earlier documents from the great new dossier of inscriptions from Aphrodisias in Caria (south-west Turkey). One document honours a citizen of Aphrodisias, named Artemidorus, who was chosen to lead the force of citizens, *paroikoi* (non-citizen inhabitants) and slaves which the city sent to aid the Roman general Quintus Oppius when he was besieged by King Mithridates of Pontus in Laodicea in 88 B.C.; a further one is a letter of Oppius written later from the island of Cos, acknowledging the city's services and promising to do whatever he can in its interests.³⁸ The cities of Asia, the Aegean and Greece were faced with a choice, between Mithridates and Rome, in which considerations of self-interest, internal political factors, Mithridates' propaganda as to the relief of debts and the freeing of slaves, and hatred of Roman exploitation, official and unofficial, all played a part.³⁹ So, on the one hand we have to see the world in terms of the choices made by these local communities; on the other we have to remember that Rome was not the only imperialist power, and that Roman control was fluctuating and incomplete throughout most of the century.

For a brief moment in 87-6 B.C., indeed, at the height of Mithridates' westward expansion, Rome controlled nothing east of the Adriatic except parts of Greece and Macedonia. To understand the impact of the state on the Mediterranean economy in this period we do therefore have to take into account the fact that more than one state was involved. Mithridates was of course by far the greatest challenge — Cicero may not have been wholly misleading when he said in 66 B.C. that with the threat of another invasion of the province of "Asia" grazing had been abandoned, the fields had remained unsown and the volume of shipping had declined, and that credit had collapsed in Rome during the invasions of 88 B.C.⁴⁰

³⁸ J. M. Reynolds, *Aphrodisias and Rome* (London, 1982), docs. 2, 3.

³⁹ For the details, which cannot be discussed here, see T. Reinach, *Mithridates Eupator, König von Pontos* (Leipzig, 1895); D. Magie, *Roman Rule in Asia Minor* (Princeton, 1950), ch. 9. For Athens, note the recent contributions of E. Badian, "Rome, Athens and Mithridates", *Amer. J. Ancient Hist.*, i (1976), pp. 105-28; C. Habicht, "Zur Geschichte Athens in der Zeit Mithridates' VI", *Chiron*, vi (1976), pp. 127-42.

⁴⁰ Cicero, *Pro lege Manilia*, 14-15, and 19.

The communities of the Mediterranean, especially the cities of the Greek East, had diplomatic relations with a variety of kings as well as with Rome. Aphrodisias, for instance, maintained contacts with Nicomedes of Bithynia,⁴¹ as Athens did with Ariobarzanes of Cappadocia, who rebuilt the Odeum,⁴² or Rhodes with Hiempsal of Numidia.⁴³ In the north, Bosphorus in the Crimea had looked to Mithridates in his early years for protection against the Scythians;⁴⁴ and a famous inscription from Dionysopolis on the west coast of the Black Sea shows how one of its citizens, named Akornion, went on an embassy to Burebista, "the first and greatest of the kings in Thrace" (that is, the king of the Dacians, who were based in present-day Rumania) and secured his friendship for the city. When the king took him as a confidant and sent him as an ambassador to Pompey, encamped at Heraclea Lyncestis in northern Greece in 49-8 B.C., Akornion took the opportunity to secure the interests not only of the king but also of his own city.⁴⁵ They were not to know that Pompey would soon be murdered on the sands of Egypt.

Or, again, there was the empire briefly created by King Tigranes of Armenia in Cilicia, Syria and Phoenicia, in probably 83-69 B.C.; the expansion of Pharnaces' kingdom in Asia Minor from his territory on the coast of the Black Sea in 48-7 B.C.; or the Parthian invasion of Syria and Asia Minor in 40 B.C. The city of Mylasa in Caria resisted this invasion and found its people slaughtered or enslaved, its city burnt along with its temples, lands ravaged and farmsteads burnt down.⁴⁶ A year or two after the war the city of Aphrodisias was seeking the restoration of slaves who had fled the city at that time, as well as free men against whom information had been laid and who were due for punishment. Nor could anyone have told how long-lasting might be the effects of the restoration by Antonius in the 30s B.C. of much of the empire which the Ptolemies had ruled from Alexandria in the third century — Phoenicia, Coele Syria, Cilicia, Cyprus, part of Crete, Cyrene.⁴⁷

This brief selection of the possible political alternatives which

⁴¹ Reynolds, *Aphrodisias and Rome*, doc. 4, a letter of (probably) Nicomedes IV of Bithynia to the city.

⁴² Vitruvius, v. 9, 1; *Orientis Graeci inscriptiones selectae*, ed. W. Dittenberger, 2 vols. (Leipzig, 1893-5), no. 354.

⁴³ V. N. Kontorini, "Le roi Hiempsal II de Numidie et Rhodes", *Antiquité classique*, xlv (1975), pp. 89-99.

⁴⁴ See Z. W. Rubinsohn, "Saumakos: Ancient History, Modern Politics", *Historia*, xxxix (1980), pp. 50-70.

⁴⁵ *Sylloge inscriptionum Graecarum*, ed. W. Dittenberger, 3rd edn., 4 vols. (Leipzig, 1915-24), no. 762; *Inscriptiones Graecae in Bulgaria repertae*, ed. G. Mihailov, 4 vols. (Sofia, 1956-66), no. 13.

⁴⁶ Strabo, *Geography*, xiv. 2, 24 (60); R. K. Sherk, *Roman Documents from the Greek East* (Baltimore, 1969), no. 59.

⁴⁷ For the controversial and obscure details of Antonius' "donations", see E. Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People*, ed. G. Vermes and F. Millar, 2 vols. (Edinburgh, 1973-9), i, p. 288 n. 5.

faced Mediterranean communities may serve to emphasize three points; firstly that they were very likely to face violent domination and exaction of tribute from some direction, and often from more than one in successive periods; secondly that freedom itself, if gained — or if it arrived as the result of a power-vacuum — might be expensive and dangerous; and thirdly that exploitation and exaction by Rome, however gigantic its scale (which nobody will deny), was not necessarily a worse situation from the point of view of an individual community. Distance might lend a degree of enchantment, and it is clearly attested that the people of Caunus in Caria, when put under the jurisdiction of Rhodes by Sulla, perhaps in 81 B.C., sent an embassy to the senate to argue that they should pay taxation to Rome instead. Even clearer is the case of the Greek cities in the area around Judaea, for which the coming of Roman rule in the 60s B.C. meant liberation and restoration after their oppression by the Hasmonean kingdom.⁴⁸ Or, at the other end of the Mediterranean, there is the case of Zama, whose people refused entry to their king Juba I on his retreat from the defeat at Thapsus in 46 B.C.; they were rewarded by Caesar, but were ordered to go on paying to Rome the tributes and indirect taxes which they had paid to the king, and became part of the province of Africa.⁴⁹ They at least seem to have been no worse off. The people of the small town of Parada in Africa, however, made exactly the same deduction from the news of Caesar's victory, with fatal results: Scipio's cavalry, in flight from Thapsus to Utica, took the town by force, made a bonfire in the forum and burnt the inhabitants on it alive.⁵⁰

That may lead us to a fourth basic point about the nature and scale of Rome's impact on the Mediterranean world in this period. It is an essential feature of the late Republic, beginning with Sulla's notorious exactions in Asia in 85 B.C., that the individual communities were faced with competing demands for services or military support, with the ultimate threat of annihilation and physical destruction, not only as between Rome and rival powers, great or small, but between rival elements of the Roman state itself. It was precisely by being divided against itself, in Asia and Greece in the 80s, in Spain in the 70s, and almost everywhere in the 40s and 30s, that the Roman state made its most exorbitant demands on the mosaic of local economies off which it lived. In the nature of the case these demands were often contradictory. In 46 B.C., for instance, the people of Sulci in Sardinia, no doubt having no choice, produced supplies for a fleet under Nasidius, an opponent of Caesar; later

⁴⁸ Cicero, *Letters to Quintus*, i. 1, 33; Strabo, *Geography*, 652; Schürer, *History of the Jewish People*, i, p. 240.

⁴⁹ [Caesar], *Bellum Africum*, 91-2 and 97.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 87, 2.

Caesar sailed in, fined them a large sum as a punishment, raised their tribute in kind from one-tenth to one-eighth of their produce, and confiscated the property of some of their citizens.⁵¹ What all this meant in both political and economic terms for the communities of the Mediterranean does indeed come before us most clearly of all in Caesar's *Civil War*, and the unjustly neglected works of the Caesarian corpus, which carry the story of the civil war down to 45 B.C.; indeed these Caesarian works are the best introduction which we have to the Mediterranean world as it was in the 40s. More particularly, it is these works which show the clearest consciousness both of the dependence of the rival Roman armies on the political allegiances of the provincial communities, and of their absolute dependence — like all other armies of course — on the economies of the areas in which they were operating. Let me take what seems to me a model example of the contradictory demands made by the conflicting elements of the Roman state on a regional economy: we find in the *African War* that in 46 B.C. Caesar could not find enough wheat in Africa because, so it was said, in the previous year all the ploughmen had been conscripted as soldiers by the Pompeians and no harvest had been produced; such corn as there was in Africa was stored in well-guarded cities, and so there was nothing for it but to rely on imported wheat — if only the trading ships (*naves onerariae*) could find the right place and make a safe landing.⁵²

So, on the one hand, Caesar's account indicates a considerable short-term effect of civil war on a local agricultural economy. On the other it takes us to a quite different theme, the question of long-distance trade by sea, which turns up everywhere in our narrative sources as an assumed part of the background against which the conflicts of the Roman revolution take place. Pompey, for instance, fled from Pharsalus in 48 B.C. and boarded a trading ship sailing from Thessaly along the coast to Amphipolis, from where he crossed to Mytilene;⁵³ Herod the Great, fleeing from the Parthians in 40 B.C., reached Alexandria and took a trading vessel round the coast to Pamphylia and then Rhodes, from where he went on to Brundisium.⁵⁴ In 43 B.C. Lentulus reported (privately to Cicero and publicly to the magistrates, senate and people of Rome) that Dolabella had roused up a hundred merchant ships on the coast of Lycia (southern Turkey), none of less than 2,000 amphorae (or some 52 tons) burthen, and would use them to take his army to Syria.⁵⁵ I need not continue with examples, since no accumulation of examples will give us any

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 98, 2.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 20-1.

⁵³ Plutarch, *Pompeius*, 73-4; compare Cato taking a trading vessel from Thessaly to Aenus in 67 B.C.: Plutarch, *Cato the Younger*, 11.

⁵⁴ Josephus, *Antiquities*, xiv. 14, 2-3 (375-8).

⁵⁵ Cicero, *Letters*, xii. 14, 1, and 15, 2 (ed. Shackleton Bailey, nos. 405-6).

idea of the scale of seaborne trade nor (still less) of its importance within the total economy. What is clear is simply that its presence could be assumed everywhere; in what way the operations of the state affected its direction or content remains very obscure. No doubt we should assume that the steady flow of tribute corn, carried to Rome from Sicily, Sardinia and Africa in private merchant vessels,⁵⁶ substantially affected the overall pattern of trade; to put it at its simplest, the ships bringing wheat to Rome must presumably have carried something in the opposite direction. But no one commented on these developments at the time. It is only later sources which provide some generalizations about trade in this period: Pliny the Elder, talking about the increasing import of Greek wines to Rome in the first century, implies that the volume of the trade could have been substantial; for instance he records that Hortensius in 50 B.C. left over 10,000 jars of Chian wine in his will.⁵⁷ Pliny also seems to imply that it was in the 50s that Italian olive oil was first exported to the provinces; by his own time, the later first century A.D., the olive was cultivated well into the interior of Gaul and Spain.⁵⁸ All that contemporary sources can provide is illustrative examples of the movement of luxury goods, wines and slaves, whose direction was — or so it seems — quite unaffected by questions of political control or contemporary military or naval operations. In the 50s ships sailing from the kingdom of Egypt to Puteoli in Italy might carry papyrus, linen and glass. In Verres' time as governor of Sicily, 73-1 B.C., ships both from "Asia", which was a province, and from Syria, Tyre and Egypt, which were not within the provincial area, came into Sicily, bringing Tyrian purple, pearls, Greek wines and slaves from Asia.⁵⁹ Verres himself, according to Cicero, was able to acquire and send home goods worth 1,200,000 *sesterces*. Cicero's list gives some hint of the varied forms of product which might embody sufficient value to be worth transporting by sea: gold, silver, ivory, purple cloths, cloth from Malta, a large quantity of coverings, tableware from Delos, Corinthian vases, corn and 400 amphorae of honey.⁶⁰ This last is of some interest, for it suggests that any product which could be satisfactorily stored could enter long-distance trade by sea, however modest the original units of production may have been. The ships coming from the East will also have arrived, in 73-1 B.C., at what must have been the height of the operations of the pirates — which, therefore, while they must have hindered trade, clearly did not stop it altogether. By contrast, states seem rarely if ever in this period to have intervened deliberately in trade except by way of

⁵⁶ See G. E. Rickman, *The Corn Supply of Ancient Rome* (Oxford, 1980).

⁵⁷ Pliny, *Natural History*, xiv. 95-78.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, x. 1-3.

⁵⁹ Cicero, *For Rabirius Postumus*, 40; Cicero, *Verrine Orations*, ii. 5, 145-6.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, ii. 2, 176, 183, 185.

requisitioning; the one explicitly mentioned exception is Pompey's attempt in 65-4 B.C. to prevent ships sailing from the Mediterranean to Mithridates' only remaining possession, the Crimea — his objective was to achieve by famine what he had not finally achieved by war.⁶¹

In other words, so far as we know, the Roman state did not systematically intervene in seaborne trade; the significance of the effects of its activities on the structure or direction of trade remains quite uncertain. Moreover, as Michael Crawford has argued, it seems that Romans or Italians did not try to increase the profits of empire by exporting their own products to their subjects; the Italian exports which can be traced archaeologically — pottery (as always) — went predominantly to places where Roman soldiers were stationed or Italian traders settled (such as Delos).⁶² However, if that is so, then the extensive colonization which is one of the most distinctive activities of the Roman state in the Caesarian and Augustan period should have had some marginal effect on long-distance trade.

The idea that the empire was expanded in the interests of trade — that is, for securing profitable markets for exports — is surely wholly anachronistic. Cicero does however firmly assert in his speech *For the Manilian Law*, delivered in 66 B.C., something which is related, but fundamentally different: that Rome had often gone to war to protect her own traders or shipowners overseas.⁶³ At the level of conscious expression it is only in the imperial period that we find (say) Pliny the Elder pointing to the relevance of the universal domination of Rome to the availability of all the different varieties of plants or the expansion of trade: "Who would not admit that, now that intercommunication has been established throughout the world, life has been advanced by the interchange of commodities and by partnership in the blessings of peace, and that even things that had previously lain concealed have all now been established in general use?"⁶⁴ But for the period concerned all that is clear is that inter-regional shipping was an accepted part of the social and economic scene. Its importance in the total economy may have been small. But we cannot know how its volume or its direction altered in the period.

In any case the general direct rule of the whole of the Mediterranean area and southern Europe which prompted Pliny's complacent observations was nowhere near being attained even by the end of the period of the civil wars. At the moment of the victory of

⁶¹ Plutarch, *Pompeius*, 39.

⁶² M. H. Crawford, in A. Giardina and A. Schiavone (eds.), *Società romana e produzione schiavistica*, 3 vols. (Rome and Bari, 1981), iii, pp. 271-83; cf. A. Tchernia, "Italian Wine in Gaul at the End of the Republic", in P. Garnsey, K. Hopkins and C. R. Whittaker, *Trade in the Ancient Economy* (London, 1983), pp. 87-104.

⁶³ Cicero, *Pro lege Manilia*, 5 and 11.

⁶⁴ Pliny, *Natural History*, xiv. 2 (Loeb trans.); cf. xxvii. 3.

Actium in 31 B.C., which secured a period of unchallenged rule for Augustus, lasting until his death in A.D. 14, the Alps and Illyricum were still unsubdued military areas, Thrace (roughly Bulgaria and European Turkey) was a client kingdom, and most of Asia Minor (present-day Turkey) was divided between the client kingdoms of Galatia, Cappadocia and Pontus. Judaea had reverted from being a provincial area to being a client kingdom under Herod the Great, while Mauretania was to become a kingdom again in 25 B.C. under the rule of Juba II. Our overall conception of the effects of state activity on Mediterranean society in this period thus has to allow for the fact that Roman rule was both incomplete and, at certain periods, liable to contract.

However, if we look at the broad lines of the Roman state's impact on social and economic life in the late Republic, a number of very general points can be established. Firstly, even in the established empire of the second century B.C. Roman provincial government never succeeded in extracting taxation or services from all the areas nominally within its borders. Some seventy years after the Pontus region in northern Turkey had become a province, the historian Arrian, as governor, reported to Hadrian in the 130s that the immediate neighbours of the coastal city of Trapezus were a people called the Sanni, very warlike, very hostile to Trapezus, living in fortified positions, practising brigandage, and indifferent to the payment of the tribute (paid in beeswax according to Pliny) which they in principle owed to Rome.⁶⁵ We would do well to see all ancient kingdoms and empires as no more than changing patchworks of control.

Secondly, in certain respects it has to be conceded that the distinction between directly ruled areas (that is, provinces) and ones which were outside the area of Roman domination hardly mattered. One of the prime characteristics of the Roman civil wars from the 70s to Actium was the way in which the competing parties demanded naval and military forces not only from provinces but from all the areas within the Roman sphere of influence. Again, some examples will suffice. From within a province, Cicero reports that Fonteius, as a proconsul of Gaul in 74-2, "ordered the provision of large forces of cavalry for the wars which the Roman people was then conducting throughout the world, large sums of money for their pay, and a very large quantity of corn for the Spanish war" (against Sertorius).⁶⁶ From outside the provincial area Lucullus was collecting ships from Cyprus, Phoenicia, Rhodes and Pamphylia in 85 B.C.;⁶⁷ 300 cavalry from the kingdom of Noricum arrived in Italy to help Caesar in 49

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, xxi. 72; Arrian, *Periplus*, 11.

⁶⁶ Cicero, *For Fonteius*, 13.

⁶⁷ Plutarch, *Lucullus*, 56.

B.C., while in the next year cavalry from King Cotys of Thrace fought on the Pompeian side in Thessaly; and from Alexandria in 48/7 B.C. Caesar called, among other forces, for cavalry from Malchus of Nabataea (Arabia).⁶⁸ There is no need to recall the various royal forces which took part in the civil war in Africa in the 40s or to give lists of the ethnic units which served at Pharsalus in 48 B.C.,⁶⁹ at Philippi in 42 and at Actium in 31. Brutus' and Cassius' forces at Philippi, for instance, included both Celts from the west and Galatians from Galatia in Asia Minor, Celtic-speaking people who had settled there in the third century B.C.⁷⁰ In the case of fleets, it is well known that Rome continued to rely on the system of requiring maritime cities to provide small naval contingents, and maintained no "Roman" fleet of its own; one remark of Cicero's seems to imply that the cost might be taken out of the cash revenues due to Rome.⁷¹ The civil wars thus involved the calling out of local forces, often it is true not very large, and their despatch all over the Mediterranean; we see a nice reflection of this in the inscription from Cyzicus (north-west Turkey) in which someone records his dream about the capture and enslavement of a friend of his who had sailed off in a city trireme to fight alongside Caesar in north Africa in 46 B.C.⁷² It is not difficult to envisage the local, short-term effects of the requisitioning of forces, men and supplies. We can note the 30,000 Galatians requisitioned to carry corn for Lucullus' campaigns in Asia Minor in 73 B.C.,⁷³ or read Plutarch's vivid description of the requisitions in Greece before the battle of Actium in 31 B.C.: Antonius' trierarchs pressed into service passing travellers, mule drivers, people working on the harvest, and young men of military age; the cities were stripped of their money, slaves and beasts for transport, and Plutarch's great-grandfather used to recall how the whole population at Anticyra was impressed to carry sacks of corn down to the sea. But when news came of Antonius' defeat, his officials and soldiers immediately fled and the people shared out the grain.⁷⁴

Thus the short-term local effects of Roman exactions could be felt both inside and outside the provincial area, and may often have been overcome without great difficulty. Whether the scale of the requisitioning of troops and fleets and their movement around the Mediterranean was sufficient to have any profound long-term effects is not clear. As always, we are hopelessly handicapped by not

⁶⁸ Caesar, *De bello civili*, i. 18, 5, and iii. 36, 4; [Caesar], *Bellum Alexandrinum*, I, 1.

⁶⁹ Appian, *Civil Wars*, ii. 70-1.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, iv. 88/373.

⁷¹ Cicero, *Verrine Orations*, ii. 1, 89.

⁷² *Sylloge inscriptionum Graecarum*, ed. Dittenberger, no. 763.

⁷³ Plutarch, *Lucullus*, 14.

⁷⁴ Plutarch, *Antonius*, 62 and 68.

knowing how to conceive of the economy as a whole, or about the scale of the normal movement of men, goods and money within it.

The mention of money leads to the third general point. So far the theme of Roman taxation, extortion and extra exactions in money has deliberately been left aside. If we now turn to this, there are a number of considerations which indicate that their effects on the total economy of the region may have been more variable and more ambivalent than is often presumed. Firstly, as was emphasized above, the mere fact that local communities paid taxes in cash or kind represents nothing new and distinctive in itself, except in Gaul. Secondly, many of the most extreme and notorious instances are themselves reflections of the particular civil war situation — that is, the maximizing of the rapid extraction of value by one arm of the Roman state in order to gain resources to fight against another: for instance, Sulla's impositions in Asia in 85 B.C.,⁷⁵ Scipio's in Syria and Asia in 48 B.C., self-righteously described by Caesar,⁷⁶ and Caesar's own in Syria in 47 B.C.⁷⁷

These cases will represent the rapid accumulation of value mainly in order to pay troops in the field; the ultimate overall effects will then have depended on where the troops went and what happened to them (civilians are not necessarily without resources as against passing soldiers, and we should not forget the Caesarian soldiers being thrown overboard in the harbour at Utica in 49 B.C.). Some exactions took the form of seizing static wealth in the shape of temple treasures or of precious metal ornaments; it was then turned into coin, and used to pay troops.⁷⁸ The effect will thus have been to some degree inflationary. The most obvious and well-known example is the process by which Cleopatra despoiled the temples of Egypt of accumulated treasures, Octavian captured them in 30 B.C. (without even the odium of impiety), carried out extensive further exactions in Alexandria, and brought the proceeds to Rome in 29 B.C.; there, presumably now in the form of coin, they caused a rise in prices and a fall in interest rates.⁷⁹

That is only one of several well-known instances where vast accumulations of value in the form of precious metal were physically

⁷⁵ Plutarch, *Sulla*, 25; Appian, *Mithridatic History*, 62-3.

⁷⁶ Caesar, *De bello civili*, iii. 31-2.

⁷⁷ Dio, *Roman History*, xliii. 49, 1-2.

⁷⁸ For removal of wealth from temples, see for example Diodorus, xxxviii/ix. 7; Plutarch, *Sulla*, 12 and 19; Pausanias, ix. 7, 6 (Sulla in Greece); Josephus, *Antiquities*, xiv. 7, 1 (105-9) (Crassus from the Temple in Jerusalem); Dio, *Roman History*, xlii. 49, 1-2, and xliii. 39, 4-5 (Caesar in Spain in 49 and 47). For the conversion of precious-metal ornaments into coin, see for example Appian, *Civil Wars*, iv. 64/273-5 (Tarsos, 43 B.C.), and v. 6, 26 (the cities of Asia, referring back to Brutus' and Cassius' exactions before Philippi). For comparative cases, see F. Millar, *The Emperor in the Roman World* (London, 1977), p. 151.

⁷⁹ Dio, *Roman History*, li. 17, 6-8, and 21, 5.

transported to Rome; we have only to think of the triumph of Pompey in 61 B.C.,⁸⁰ or the 600 million *sesterces* "from booty" (*ex manubiis*) displayed in Caesar's triumph in 46 B.C.⁸¹ Yet that sum itself represents only about twice the level of the largest individual fortunes recorded from Rome. Moreover, we may still ask what sort, or scale, of loss to the economies of the various conquered regions was represented by the removal of the type of spoils in precious metal or other valuables which it was physically possible to bring to Rome. That must remain an open question.

It is certain that, in principle at least, the sums annually collected in cash in the provinces as taxation were also supposed to be sent physically to Rome.⁸² But at the same time substantial sums were sent out from Rome, being issued to quaestors or proconsuls for expenditure in the provinces: for instance the 12 million *sesterces* given to Verres for purchases of corn in Sicily;⁸³ or, better, the pattern revealed earlier by Verres' conveniently brief accounts as quaestor in 84 B.C.; "received 2,235,417 *sesterces*; given out for *stipendium* (pay), corn, the *legati*, the *pro quaestore*, the praetorian cohort, 1,635,417 *sesterces*; deposited at Ariminum 600,000 *sesterces*".⁸⁴ In this case some two-thirds of the total sum was spent locally and the rest deposited locally — its subsequent fate being unknown; the same procedure could have taken place in a province — note the 18 million *sesterces* granted to Piso as proconsul of Macedonia in 57 B.C.⁸⁵ — and could therefore have involved the redistribution of at least some of Rome's tax revenue in a different part of the Mediterranean. We see a neat example of such a redistribution, for instance, in Asinius Pollio's report to Cicero of an event in Spain in 43 B.C.: "Balbus the quaestor, having accumulated a large sum of money, and a large quantity of gold, and having gathered in more money from public exactions, and without even giving the pay to the soldiers, has set off from Gades and crossed to the kingdom of Bogud in Morocco".⁸⁶

We cannot compile anything like a balance-sheet of Roman public finance in the late Republic.⁸⁷ But even the most sceptical would

⁸⁰ Pliny, *Natural History*, xxxvii. 12-18; Plutarch, *Pompeius*, 45; Appian, *Mithridatic History*, 116.

⁸¹ Velleius, ii. 56, 2; cf. Appian, *Civil Wars*, ii. 102.

⁸² See for example Velleius, ii. 62, 3: "the moneys . . . which were being transported to Rome by the quaestors"; Cicero, *Letters*, xii. 14-15 (ed. Shackleton Bailey, nos. 405-6); Nicolaus of Damascus, in *Die Fragmente der griechischen Historiker*, ed. F. Jacoby, 3 vols. in 17 (Berlin and Leiden, 1923-58), no. 90, Frag. 130, xviii/55.

⁸³ Cicero, *Verrine Orations*, ii. 3, 163.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, ii. 1, 36.

⁸⁵ Cicero, *Against Piso*, 86.

⁸⁶ Cicero, *Letters*, x. 32 (ed. Shackleton Bailey, no 415).

⁸⁷ For serious attempts to do so, see esp. Tenney Frank, *Economic survey of Ancient Rome*, 5 vols. (Baltimore, 1933-40), i, pp. 322-47; M. H. Crawford, *Roman Republican Coinage* (Cambridge, 1974), pp. 694-707.

have to agree that there was a very large net inflow of spoils, tribute cash, and corn into Italy, and primarily to Rome. But Roman soldiers, who were paid in coin, were nearly all stationed in the provinces, and corn was also bought in some provinces by the state.⁸⁸ Vast amounts of moveable wealth were also displaced from one region to another by the efforts of the Roman state, and above all when its energies were maximized by its being divided against itself. It is also clear that the volume of Roman minting at successive periods corresponded above all to the scale of military effort.⁸⁹ Large sums may however have been raised in a province and spent there without ever being transferred physically to Rome. In other cases state funds or the spoils of conquest may perhaps have been moved directly from one province to another, whether officially or unofficially. Our picture of the profits of conquest and their use perhaps does not yet take enough account of Suetonius' description of Caesar's financial and diplomatic dealings while he was engaged on the conquest of Gaul: "He was no less energetic in gaining the attachment of kings and provinces throughout the world, offering some of them thousands of captives as a gift, offering others, without the authority of senate or people, the dispatch of auxiliary forces where and when they wished, and adorning the prominent cities of Italy, Gaul and Spain, as well as Greece and Asia, with splendid public works".⁹⁰

In other words, if we could analyse the overall economic effects of the convulsive activities of late Republican Rome, we would find highly complex patterns, only one of which would be the steady movement of coins, corn, slaves and valuables to Rome and Italy. But we cannot analyse it anyway, and probably never will be able to; the best attempt to do so, for one large region, namely the Greek-speaking eastern Mediterranean, remains the last part of Michael Rostovtzeff's *Social and Economic History of the Hellenistic World*. Rostovtzeff's methods and historical views, and the connection between them and his unparalleled capacity for assembling information, have never yet received the critical study they deserve. But it would not be inappropriate to compare his two great social and economic histories, of the Roman empire (1926) and of the Hellenistic world (1941), with Braudel's *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II*, which has been the subject of so much discussion.⁹¹ Any critical appraisal of Rostovtzeff, moreover, would

⁸⁸ For the outflow of expenditure from Rome, see M. H. Crawford, "Rome and the Greek World: Economic Relationships", *Econ. Hist. Rev.*, 2nd ser., xxx (1977), pp. 42-52.

⁸⁹ Crawford, *Roman Republican Coinage*, pp. 640-707; cf. H. Mattingley, "Coinage and the Roman State", *Numis. Chron.*, xvii (1977), pp. 199-215 ff.; Hopkins, "Taxes and Trade in the Roman Empire", on pp. 106 ff.

⁹⁰ Suetonius, *Divus Julius*, 28.

⁹¹ F. Braudel, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II*, trans. S. Reynolds, 2 vols. (London, 1972-3); M. Rostovtzeff, *The Social and Economic History of the Roman Empire* (Oxford, 1926); M. Rostovtzeff, *The Social*

(cont. on p. 23)

be highly unjust if it did not accept that we have failed to go beyond him. The greater analytical sophistication which has since been achieved, or at least claimed, has not been matched by a comparable capacity to confront social and economic models with the empirical data which might serve to test them.

There are, however, at least some areas where progress could be made. We could look further at the archaeology of public buildings, as for instance the late John Ward Perkins did a few years ago, showing that Roman-style public buildings cannot be traced archaeologically in the western provinces until the time of Augustus.⁹² But of course the archaeological evidence never tells the whole story — we know for instance that in fact there was a basilica at Corduba by the middle of the first century B.C., for Cassius Longinus was giving justice there in the winter of 48/7.⁹³ Alternatively we could study the movements of amphorae and other pottery products around the Mediterranean.⁹⁴ We could concentrate on those areas, like the Greek cities of Asia Minor, or Egypt, where there are real concentrations of local documents. But above all we might hope for general studies of the actual production, distribution and use of all types of coinage — Celtic, Spanish, North African and Greek, as well as Roman — over the whole area; in other words, we might see how far the coins would yield a monetary, as opposed to a numismatic history.⁹⁵ Such a history would still have to recall the primitive and laborious means by which metal could be mined, minted and moved around, and could not ignore Cicero's assumption that sums paid to Sicilian cities for corn will have been brought to them on the backs of mules.⁹⁶

But, finally, if serious analyses of the social and economic context of the Roman revolution are not yet available, we can at least see the

(n. 91 cont.)

and *Economic History of the Hellenistic World*, 3 vols. (Oxford, 1941). I know of no major retrospective analysis of Rostovtzeff's two great works. For a sympathetic and perceptive sketch, see A. D. Momigliano, "M. I. Rostovtzeff", in his *Studies in Historiography* (London, 1966), pp. 91-104. On Braudel, apart from the well-known essay by J. H. Hexter, "Fernand Braudel and the Monde Braudellien", in his *On Historians* (London, 1979), pp. 61-145, see now S. Kinser, "Annaliste Paradigm? The Geohistorical Structuralism of Fernand Braudel", *Amer. Hist. Rev.*, lxxxvi (1981), pp. 63-105.

⁹² J. B. Ward Perkins, "From Republic to Empire: Reflections on the Early Provincial Architecture of the Roman West", *Jl. Roman Studies*, lx (1970), pp. 1-19.

⁹³ [Caesar], *Bellum Alexandrinum*, 52, 2.

⁹⁴ Note, for instance, D. Manacorda, "The Ager Cosanus and the Production of the Amphorae of Sestius: New Evidence and a Reassessment", *Jl. Roman Studies*, lxxviii (1978), pp. 122-31; and see also Giardina and Schiavone (eds.), *Società romana e produzione schiavistica*, ii, and the survey article by J. Paterson, "'Salvation from the Sea': Amphorae and Trade in the Roman West", *Jl. Roman Studies*, lxxii (1982), pp. 146-57.

⁹⁵ For example, Nash, "Plus ça change"; Nash, *Settlement and Coinage in Central Gaul*; M. H. Crawford, "The Financial Organisation of Republican Spain", *Numis. Chron.*, ix (1969), pp. 79-93; R. C. Knapp, "The Date and Purpose of the Iberian Denarii", *Numis. Chron.*, xviii (1977), pp. 1-19; cf. A. Giovannini, *Rome et la circulation monétaire en Grèce au II^e siècle avant Jésus-Christ* (Basel, 1978).

⁹⁶ Cicero, *Verrine Orations*, ii, 3, 183.

nature and the limits of the effects of these great changes in the lives of a few individuals. I will conclude with one such individual, Philotas of Amphissa, who is known to us from the pages of Plutarch's *Life of Antonius*. He was born in Amphissa, near Delphi, in about the mid-50s B.C., and will have been a child and then adolescent at the time of the great civil war battles of Pharsalus and Philippi, in 48 and 42. By the mid-30s his education at home was complete, and he set off to Alexandria, still the capital of the Ptolemaic kingdom, to pursue the study of medicine. There he got to know a cook at the court of Antonius and Cleopatra, and saw one day in the kitchen eight wild boars roasting, at different stages of readiness; their highnesses were unpunctual, it was explained, but still liked their wild boar done to a turn. Later Philotas was doctor to Antonius' son by Fulvia, and afterwards returned home to Greece, to pursue his profession and tell endless stories to Plutarch's grandfather.⁹⁷

Philotas' life thus touched briefly on the major events of the period, but was not fundamentally affected by them. His career was a symptom of the fact that the entire communal and cultural basis of the life of the Greek cities survived, damaged and depressed but intact, through the period of the civil wars; they were thus able to adjust with ease to the new and immediately evident fact of monarchy after the battle of Actium in 31 B.C. A recently published inscription from Ephesus, for instance, records a man who, within not more than a year or two of Octavian's being voted the name "Augustus" in 27 B.C., had "supervised the setting up of 'the Augustus' [that is, a statue of him] and the dedication of the sanctuary".⁹⁸ But the conscious, political adjustment to changed circumstances is a different story, some of which can indeed be told.⁹⁹ For the real social and economic history of the world in which the Roman revolution took place, however, I wish that I could see how to do better than the friend of Plutarch's grandfather, with his endless recital of anecdotes. To do better, however, we would need a model, or models. But what models are available to help us understand the history of a region made up of innumerable communities at very different stages of development, within which longer-term changes were overshadowed for contemporaries, as they are for us, by the demands of competing states and factions and the needs and effects of war?

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⁹⁷ Plutarch, *Antonius*, 28. I owe to Dr. W. E. H. Cockle a number of items of evidence indicating that wild boar were known in Egypt and were hunted there: for example, Theophrastus, *De historia et causis plantarum*, iv. 12, 4; A. S. Hunt (ed.), *Catalogue of the Greek Papyri in the John Rylands Library Manchester*, 4 vols. (Manchester, 1911-52), ii, no. 238 (A.D. 262).

⁹⁸ *Supplementum epigraphicum graecum*, xxvi, no. 1243.

⁹⁹ For this, cf. F. Millar, "State and Subject: The Impact of Monarchy", forthcoming in F. Millar and E. Segal (eds.), *Caesar Augustus: Seven Aspects* (Oxford, 1984).